

# A Decade of



# WHITEMAN SPIRIT



Volume 41, No. 48

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FRIDAY, DEC. 19, 2003

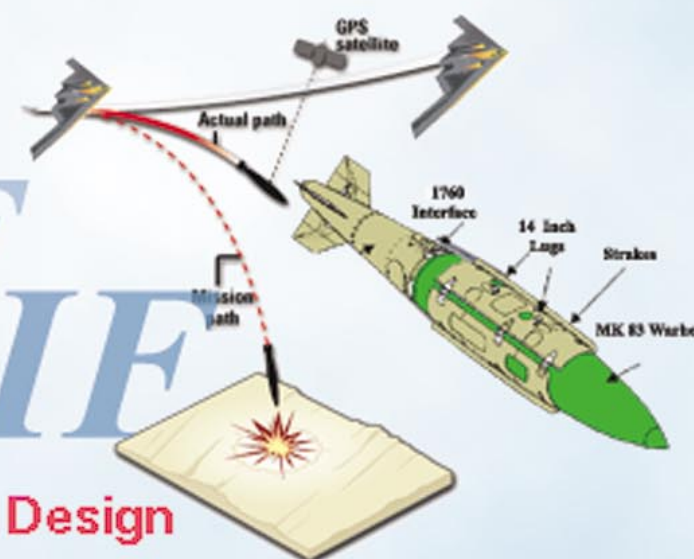
## 1993

## 2003



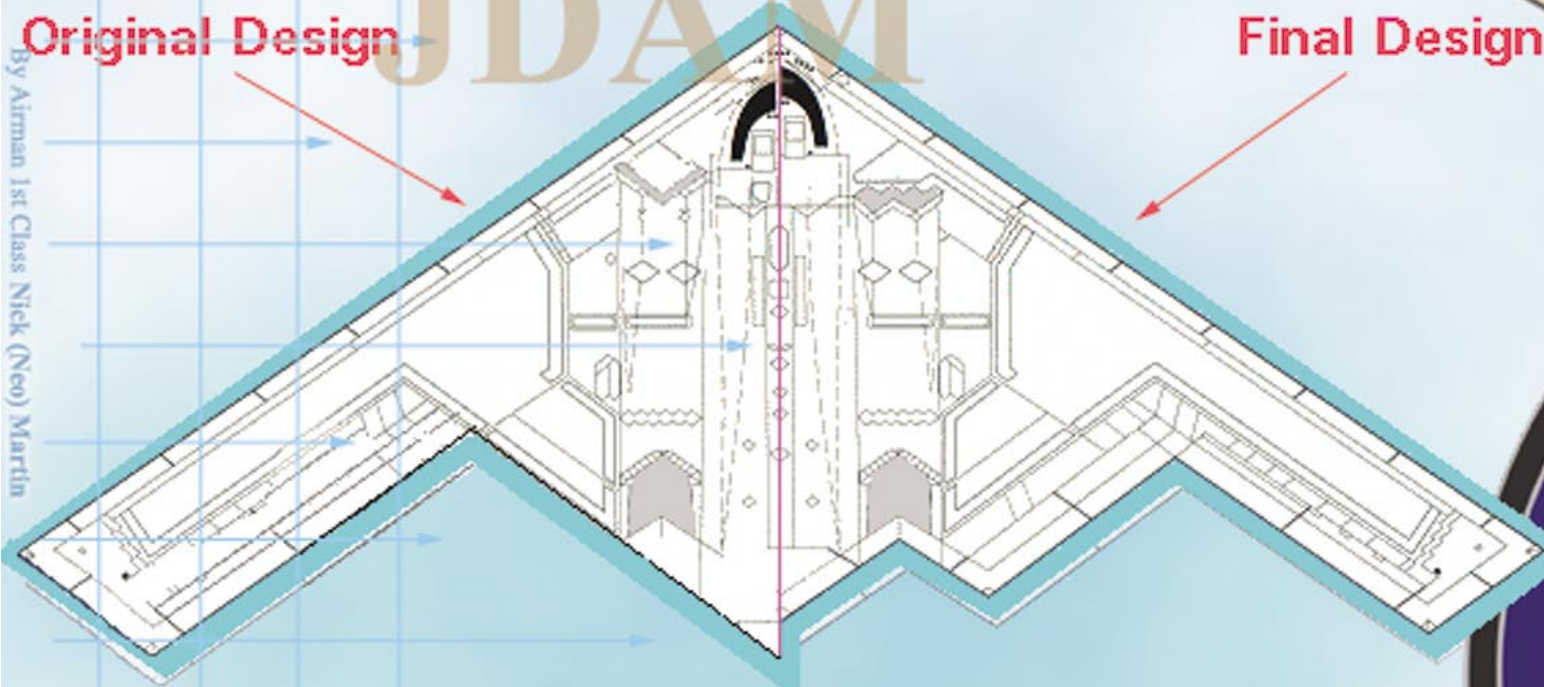
10th Anniversary  
of Spirit Power

100th Anniversary  
of Air Power



Original Design

Final Design



17 Dec 93 — Amid much fanfare, the wing's first B-2 arrived at Whiteman shortly after 1400 hours. Piloted by General John Loh, ACC Commander, and Lt Col John Bellanger, the aircraft flew from Edwards AFB, California, to Whiteman. The aircraft was dubbed *The Spirit of Missouri*. The rest was history ... and the future.



By Airman 1st Class Nick (Neo) Martin





CHIEF OF STAFF  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

16 December 2003

Dear Colonel Raaberg

Congratulations to the 509th Bomb Wing on 10 years of outstanding B-2 Spirit operations! In a short decade, you've taken a new weapons system, perfected it and employed it three times in the defense of our nation. You were at the tip of the spear for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Not only did you deploy forward for the first time, but also you flew combat from two locations simultaneously, using half the B-2 fleet in the opening days. Truly, you "kicked the door down and put steel on targets."

Your efforts over the past decade make our nation proud. You are indeed "America's Bomber!" Best wishes for continued success in the decade ahead.

JOHN P. JUMPER  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

# Commander's Corner



**By Col. Doug Raaberg**  
509th Bomb Wing Commander



**The B-2 — Fully Operational Capable for America's Global Strike task force!**

It's official — the B-2 is Fully Operational Capable! Our FOC milestone was announced by the 8th Air Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, during this week's 10th Anniversary gala commemorating the delivery of the first B-2 to Whiteman. Congratulations to all 509ers, past and present! It has been a decade of success solely attributed to the dedicated work of our Spirit Team ... it's airmen, contractors and community partners.

The *Spirit of Missouri* that arrived here in 1993 was not the combat-proven veteran we know today. It is a complex machine, understood by few, but chock full of potential. That potential was rapidly realized.

In October 1996, the B-2 team absolutely surprised Air Force leadership with a dazzling video of our first full GPS-guided weapons drop, striking 16 targets with 16 precise hits! It was then our leaders realized the question was no longer "how many planes to kill a target," rather, "how many targets can a single plane kill?"

The power of the B-2's capability was unleashed in 1999, flying combat for the first time in support of Operation Allied Force. The B-2 fleet flew only one percent of all allied sorties. However, our all-weather, precision capability meant we dropped 11 percent of the munitions. The Spirit proved that an air campaign complicated by foul weather could still strike highly sensitive targets with impunity.

Needless to say, we've been on the forefront of the war on terrorism since Sept. 11, 2001. B-2s led the way into Afghanistan, flying the longest combat sorties in history — 44 hours — all from the heartland of America. Though these long-duration flights were a testament to the endurance of our entire team, we were

moving forward — literally — for the next step in the maturation of the wing's combat capability.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was the biggest test for the 509th Bomb Wing since calling Whiteman its "home drome." After deploying hundreds of expeditionary airmen to support ongoing AEFs 7/8, we "fed the fight," sending an expeditionary bomb squadron to a forward location — our first expeditionary B-2 deployment! Not to be left out, those who remained at home supported combat ops as well, and in the first two days, 10 B-2s — half the fleet — struck the heart of Saddam Hussein's regime from multiple directions. We literally kicked the doors down from night one and paved the way for our ground forces ... all in eighteen nights of concentrated aerial precision bombardment!

Without a doubt these achievements firmly established the B-2 as a Fully Operational Capable weapon system ... for the Air Force and the Combatant Commands. We are not done! Our story is just beginning. In the past few months, we've flown the B-2 to greater heights. In fact, our combat capability has increased five-fold as we've ushered in the era of small precision weapons: the 500-pound JDAM. More improvements will follow that will change the complexion of the B-2's capability and survivability.

You're the legacy of "a decade of Spirit power, a century of airpower." Those who attended the first aircraft delivery ten years ago stand today in awe at what you have accomplished! So what about tomorrow? At the 20th anniversary, we will be the ones standing in amazement of what we and our successors built!

**NORTHROP GRUMMAN**  
Integrated Systems

President

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15 December 2003

Brigadier General (Sel) Douglas L. Raaberg, USAF  
Commander, 509th Bomb Wing  
Whiteman AFB, MO 63505

Dear General (Sel) Raaberg:

I am honored to represent the employees of Northrop Grumman at the December 17 ceremonies to observe the 10th Anniversary of the Spirit of Missouri's delivery to the 509th Bomb Wing. Northrop Grumman takes great pride in its role as the prime contractor for the B-2 Spirit.

Ten years ago we delivered the world's most advanced aircraft, one that for the first time combined persistence, stealth and a large payload in one weapon system. Since then, the 509th Bomb Wing has matured the B-2 system into what it is today. Your team developed its operational concepts and maintenance procedures, refined them during training missions, and on several occasions employed this remarkable system in combat.

We want you to know that Northrop Grumman and our industry team will continue to work with the Air Force to enhance the B-2's ability to enable operational employment concepts required for global power projection. We are committed to ensuring that the Spirit is as effective in the future as it is today.

Please extend my congratulations to all of the women and men of the 509th Bomb Wing. Truly, "Global Power for America" starts here!

Sincerely,

S. J. Seymour

## Editorial Staff

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**The deadline for article submissions to the *Whiteman Spirit* is noon Friday. If a holiday falls on Friday, the deadline then becomes 4 p.m. Thursday. Articles will be published on a space-available basis. Submission doesn't guarantee publication.**

For more information, call the *Whiteman Spirit* office at 687-6133, fax us at 687-7948, e-mail: whiteman.spirit@whiteman.af.mil or write to us at:

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## 8th AF commander declares full operational capability for B-2

By Senior Airman Shawn Clements and  
Airman 1st Class Nick Martin

Public Affairs

Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, announced Full Operational Capability status for the B-2, Wednesday at a ceremony marked by the *Spirit of Missouri*'s reenactment of its first delivery here 10 years ago.

Col. Scott Land, 509th Operations Group deputy commander, and Lt. Col. Rich Vanderburgh, 509th Operations Support Squadron, flew the *Spirit of Missouri* from Palmdale, Calif., to Whiteman, swooping low over a flightline crowd of 1,500 flag-waving guests. The crew delivered their flight documents to Col. Doug Raaberg, 509th Bomb Wing commander, signifying completion of the reenactment.

"The B-2 Spirit is combat proven. It's now officially fully operational," Carlson said. "It does everything we wanted it to — and then some."

FOC is the ultimate milestone in the development of any new weapon system, signifying fulfillment of the original requirements for the equipment.

The B-2's journey to FOC status was an eventful one.

"As we've heard, during the 10-year journey to fully operational capability status, the B-2 Spirit flew and fought in three major theater conflicts," Carlson said.

Deploying the aircraft forward for Operation Iraqi Freedom showed the full development of the B-2 team, said the general.

"The B-2 shelters — along with a sophisticated sustainment system — made that possible," Carlson said. "Those shelters provided the critical support needed to maintain them. Thanks to all of you here who helped turn this requirement into a reality."

The latest chapter in the history of this base and the history of military aviation began with the arrival of the B-2, said U.S. Representative Ike Skelton, Missouri's 4th District.

"The B-2 changed the calculation of the number of planes per target to the number of targets per plane," Skelton said.

With the B-2 mission firmly established here, this base not only has a bright future ahead but it's also the premier air force base in the nation, the congressman said.

"The B-2 mission ensures that Whiteman will continue to be a vital part of our national security establishment for decades to come," he said.



Col. Doug Raaberg, 509th Bomb Wing commander, unveils the 10th Anniversary memento replica of the *Spirit of Missouri*'s nose landing gear door as Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, and U.S. Rep. Ike Skelton, Missouri's 4th District, applaud its unveiling.



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM — Members of the 509th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron begin preflight preparations March 29 at a forward operating location. More than 200 people deployed to the location for 35 days.

ward operating location. More than 200 people deployed to the location for 35 days.



EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — A B-2 Spirit drops Joint Direct Attack Munitions separation test vehicles over Edwards in an earlier test. On Aug. 6, a B-2 dropped 80 inert JDAMs during a test to increase the B-2's operational capability.



ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam — A B-2 Spirit taxis into place on the flightline here Sept. 17 after an 18-hour flight from its home at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. Two B-2s and about 100

airmen from the 509th Bomb Wing are here for a bomber training exercise. Andersen AFB is a forward-operating location for bombers and is a key player in the Air Force's global power projection.



This issue of the Whiteman Spirit is dedicated to the thousands of 509ers who, in a decade took a new weapon system from initial delivery to combat-proven veteran three times over. The following pages are only a snapshot of the many achievements along the way. The story of the 509th is an impressive one, and no 32-page document could ever hope to capture it all. We hope you enjoy this look back as the 509th looks forward to the next 10 years.

The 509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs Team

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Team Whiteman greets the first B-2 stealth bomber upon its arrival here Dec. 17, 1993.



509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chiefs set up markers before the *Spirit of Missouri's* arrival. The event was part of the wing's celebration of the B-2's 10th anniversary.

## Cheering crowd greets first Whiteman B-2

*(Editor's Note: This story first appeared in the Dec. 23, 1993, edition of the Missouri Warrior.)*

**By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Carpenter**  
Public Affairs

A cheering crowd of more than 22,000 welcomed the Air Force's first operational B-2 stealth bomber to Whiteman Air Force Base, Dec. 17.

The *Spirit of Missouri*, the first of 20 B-2s to be based here, arrived at 2:04 p.m. and performed a flyover for the crowd before touching down on the runway.

"Today's delivery of the first B-2 to Air combat Command and Whiteman AFB opens another chapter in aviation history," said Dr. Sheila Widnall, Secretary of the Air Force.

"This new chapter was inspired by historic changes in an age of uncertainty that demands we stay capable and engaged. The B-2 embodies this concept of responsiveness.

Piloted by Gen. Mike Loh, ACC commander, and Lt. Col. John Belanger, director of operations for the 393rd Bomb Squadron, the plane made a ceremonial pass in front of the cheering crowd, before

parking in a specially prepared ceremonial reception area.

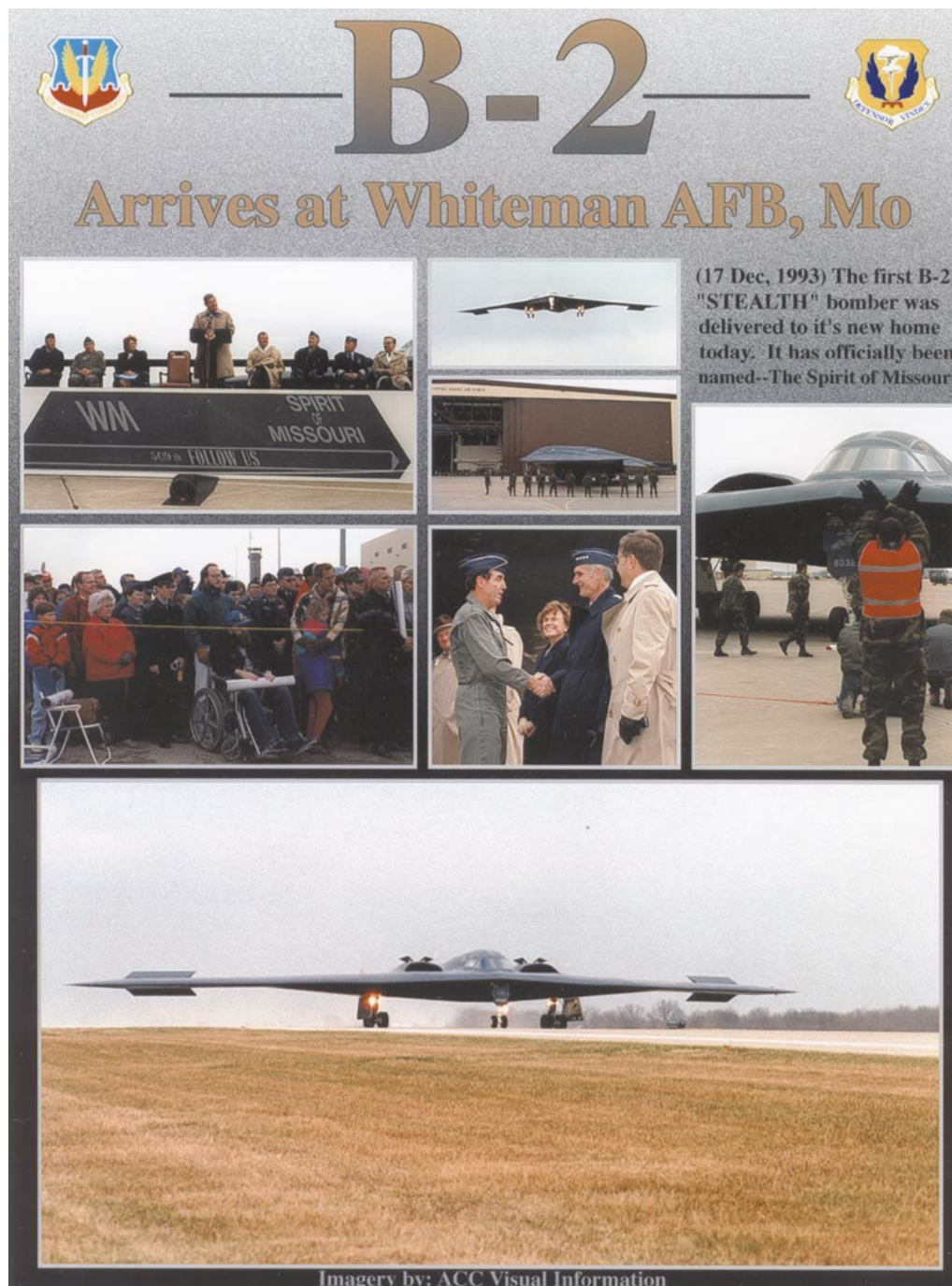
"This airplane is remarkable and reflects the best of America's technology and ingenuity," said Loh over special loudspeakers hooked in the B-2's cockpit as he steered the plane toward three static aircraft. The statics — a B-29, B-52 and FB-111 — represented the aircraft flown by the 509th Bomb Wing during its nearly 50-year history.

"This is truly an historic day for all of us in Missouri, and particularly for the community around Whiteman AFB," said U.S. Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond (R-Mo). "It is with great excitement and enthusiasm that we turn a new page in the history of this base."

After parking the B-2 in the ceremonial area, Loh and Belanger climbed from the cockpit and were greeted by Bond, Widnall, Gen. Merrill McPeak, Air Force Chief of Staff, Kent Kresa, chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer of Northrop Corp., U.S. Congressman Ike Skelton (D-Mo), Lt. Gen. Stephen Croker, 8th Air Force commander, and Brig. Gen. Ronald Marcotte, 509th BW commander.

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## CHEERING, continued from Page 4

"The B-2 is already a seasoned veteran of political wars, technical skirmishes and fiscal battles," said McPeak.

"It has landed on this flightline today, not just because of its stealthiness and load-carrying capability, but because of its toughness and tenacity. It promises to be a terrible enemy of anyone who seeks mortal combat with America."

The official paperwork for the B-2 was ceremonially handed from Loh to Croker, and then to Marcotte.

Marcotte then handed the papers to the person the ceremony narrator called the "man who really owns the Spirit of Missouri, and will be responsible for its care and feeding — the plane's crew chief — MSgt. Keith Meadows."

"Today's achievement involved the collective efforts of thousands of companies — big and small — and tens of thousands of men and women from across America. Representing all those companies and the dedicated workers comprising our team, it is my pleasure and privilege to claim a rightful place in aerospace history for the Air Force-Northrop industrial partnership that worked so well together on the B-2 program," said Kresa.

"This airplane is cost effective in the most important ledger there is — the lives of men and women called to serve in the United States armed forces."

Skelton described his feelings about the B-2 arrival by recounting an experience as an 11-year-old boy seeing an Army transport plane pulling a glider overhead in Missouri.

"In my wildest dreams, I could never have imagined that I would be a part of making the former Sedalia Army Air Field the most modern bomber base in the world," said Skelton.

"Today, Whiteman begins a new era in its history. The world's most modern military airplane has arrived to make its home among us in West Central Missouri."

"We all welcome this new Air Force assignment and greet it with enthusiasm."

A letter to the base from Wilkerson Wright, Orville and Wilbur Wright's nephew, described the true spirit of the day.

"The B-2 demonstrates for all who need convincing that the spirit of creativity and invention that inspired my uncles is still very much alive in this country. All Americans stand taller and safer in what you have done."

Special thanks to Col. Scott Land, Lt. Col. Robert Hontz, Maj. Jeff Johnson, Capt. Paul Burger, the 10th Anniversary planning committees and the scores of people who helped with the 10th anniversary celebration.

**Col. Doug Raaberg**  
**509th Bomb Wing Commander**



✓ The 509th Operations Group Loading Standardization Crew and the 393rd Bomb Squadron Lead Crew successfully completed the first bomb load on the *Spirit of Missouri* Jan. 24.

✓ In March, Lt. Col. Richard Newton, 393rd BS commander, becomes the first Whiteman-trained pilot. Also, the first class of officers to receive instructor pilot training for the B-2 began. The class included Maj. Steven Tippetts, Richard Vanderburgh, Jim Whitney and Capt. David Anderson.

✓ The *Spirit of Missouri* participated in a flyover at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., April 28. It was the first time the B-2 had been involved in such an event.

✓ In May, the *Spirit of Missouri* passed the 100 hours of flight threshold. Piloting the aircraft were Lt. Cols. Tony Imondi, 509th OG deputy commander, and John Belanger, 393rd BS operations officer.

✓ Whiteman's only B-2 underwent its second hourly post-flight inspection and emerged with a clean bill of health.

✓ The *Spirit of Missouri* flew to Andrews AFB, Md., as part of Air Combat Command's Projection Power Day. This was the first time the B-2 landed outside of Whiteman.

✓ The *Spirit of Missouri* flew five sorties in six days, this was the first time the B-2 flew that many sorties in such a short time span.

✓ The first B-2 pilot combat survival training class was conducted at an area near Truman Lake.



**Maj. Scott Land, Capt. Dave Anderson, Maj. Jimmy Smithers, Lt. Cols. Jim Whitney, Tony Imondi and John Belanger, and Maj. Rich Vanderburgh attend a B-2 instructor pilot training class.**

✓ On June 17, Maj. Jimmy Smithers, 393rd Bomb Squadron, became the first Whiteman-trained B-2 instructor pilot.

✓ The *Spirit of California*, the second operational B-2, was named on March 31.

✓ The *Spirit of Texas*, the third operational B-2, arrived at Whiteman Aug. 31 and was named on Sept. 24.

✓ Four squadrons were activated in September and assigned to the 509th Medical Group. They were the



**Capt. William Barrett, Steve Chappel and Gavin Ketchen, and Maj. Dave Anderson pose with a fan at the *Spirit of Washington* naming ceremony Oct. 29.**

509th Medical Support Squadron, 509th Dental Squadron, 509th Aerospace Medicine Squadron and 509th Medical Operations Squadron.

✓ The *Spirit of California* carried out the first-ever operational delivery of munitions by a B-2 when it flew to the Utah Test Range to drop two inert MK-84 2,000-pound bombs on Sept. 23.

✓ The *Spirit of Washington* was named on Oct. 29 and arrived at Whiteman on Oct. 30.

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- ✓ In January, the 509th launched three B-2s within 35 minutes of each other marking the first time that many B-2s were in the air at once.
- ✓ The 509th's B-2s made their first appearance at a Red Flag exercise at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., that January.
- ✓ On Feb. 17, the 509th's sixth B-2, 89-0127, arrived at Whiteman. It was named the *Spirit of Kansas* May 13.
- ✓ In March, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Sheila Widnall visited Whiteman. During her stay, she flew the *Spirit of Washington*, becoming the first woman to fly a B-2.
- ✓ During ceremonies at Columbia Metropolitan Airport in Columbia, S.C., the wing's fifth B-2 was dubbed the *Spirit of South Carolina* April 15.
- ✓ John Glenn, Ohio senator and former astronaut, visited Whiteman and flew the B-2.
- ✓ In June, Brig. Gen. Ronald Marcotte flew the *Spirit of Missouri* nonstop from Whiteman to Paris for the Paris Air Show. The B-2 landed in Paris for an hour, where, with engines still running, it changed crews and flew back to Missouri. The 11-hour flight to and the 13-hour flight back marked the longest flights ever made by the B-2 fleet to date.
- ✓ The 509th's seventh B-2, 89-0128, arrived at Whiteman June 28 and was named *Spirit of Nebraska* Sept. 3.
- ✓ The *Spirit of Kansas* flew its first mission over the Pacific Sept. 1 to Honolulu to participate in the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the end of World War II.
- ✓ The eighth B-2 was named the *Spirit of Georgia* in a ceremony at Robbins AFB, Ga., Dec. 11.



Local community leaders and Team Whiteman members bid the *Spirit of Missouri* farewell as it takes off for Palmdale, Calif., on Nov. 9 to receive Block 30 upgrades. The upgrades took two years.

"The Spirit of Missouri holds a special place in the hearts of 509ers. It was the first B-2 to arrive at Whiteman, and since its arrival, it's been a real workhorse for us. We've learned a lot about the maintenance and operations from this aircraft, and look forward to learning about the upgrades when it returns," said Col. Jim Macon, 509th Bomb Wing vice commander, said when this B-2 went to Northrop Grumman's Assembly Plant in Palmdale, Calif., for Block 30 upgrades Nov. 9, 1995.

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"It's important we recognize the sacrifices made by the veterans who served before us. Without their patriotism, our lives would be vastly different. The B-2 represents the next generation of technology that will help preserve the peace the World War II veterans secured, and that's why it was fitting to have the B-2 as part of this celebration." — Col. Greg Power, 509th Operations Group commander, said referring to the B-2's participation in the 50th anniversary of the U.S. victory over Japan ending WWII. The B-2 flew its first mission to Hawaii on Sept. 1, 1995.

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"Each day was one step toward our goals and our future. Today, we can look back and see our accomplishments while at the same time create our future to meet our objective ... the mission." — Tech. Sgt. Michael Lucchesi, 509th Maintenance Squadron armament systems maintenance NCO in charge, said when the first of three B-2 bomb rack assemblies arrived here in January 1995.

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**Above:** The B-2 is silhouetted by the Alaskan winter moon and ground lights as it sits on the tarmac at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. In early March, the flight test aircraft, known as Fire and Ice, went through two weeks of cold-climate testing to verify the results of climactic laboratory testing in 1993, and elevated the deployability and suitability of the B-2 to operate in extreme cold weather. This aircraft became the 14th operational B-2 and was named the *Spirit of Ohio* July 18, 1997.

**Left:** Senior Airman Skip Jones and Staff Sgt. Paul Hofer, 393rd Bomb Squadron Lead Crew, practice loading the GATS-GAM on the weapons load trainer. The 509th received its first 17 GPS-aided munitions in July. The purpose of this munition was to equip the B-2 with an interim, early, near-precision direct attack weapon. The GATS-GAM preceded the 2,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munition. "We are beginning to change our thinking from how many aircraft it takes to destroy one target, to how many targets can we destroy with one aircraft," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ronald Fogleman at a 1996 Air Force Association Warfare Symposium.

✓ The base newspaper changes its name from the *Missouri Warrior* to the *Whiteman Spirit*. This was the sixth known name change in 54 years. The change reflected Whiteman's new mission.

✓ The 10th B-2 arrived at Whiteman Jan. 24. It was named the *Spirit of Alaska* July 27.

✓ From Jan. 31-Feb. 16, 509ers participated in the first-ever forward-basing exercises with the B-2 bombers at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

✓ The 509th Bomb Wing conducted its fourth aircraft generation exercise March 28-29. This was the first time a B-2 was generated to a full-alert configuration.

✓ Whiteman receives its second Block 20 weapon system trainer in May. The B-2 WST, used for initial qualification and recurring training for the pilots, included a full-scale mock-up of the B-2 cockpit with all systems completely active and fully integrated with the visual and motion systems.

✓ The 11th operational and third B-2 delivered in 1996 arrived at Whiteman May 15. This B-2 was the first Block 20 aircraft delivered.

✓ The *Spirit of Hawaii* was named in a ceremony at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, May 27.

✓ The first Block 20 B-2 training sortie was flown June 1. The mission lasted about five and a half hours.

✓ The *Spirit of Oklahoma* was named in a ceremony at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., Sept. 14.

✓ Maj. Eric Single and Capt. Darrell Davis, 393rd BS pilots, were part of the winning 9th Air Force team in the bi-annual Longshot Bombing Competition Aug. 14-16 at Nellis AFB, Nev.

✓ The wing executed the first operational drop of the Global Positioning System-Aided Munition Sept. 17. Each of the three weapons dropped landed within seven feet of the target.

✓ The first live drops of 16 GATS-GAM took place at the Nellis AFB range complex Oct. 8. These live drops culminated a four-year effort by munitions members assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron's Munitions Flight.

✓ The Air Force named its 12th operational B-2 the *Spirit of Florida* at MacDill AFB, Fla., Oct. 23.

✓ The 394th Combat Training Squadron was activated during a ceremony Nov. 8. The 394th CTS provides aviators qualified in the B-2 weapon system to the operational 393rd BS.

✓ With less than three years of operation, the B-2 completed its 1,000th flight Nov. 21.

"The B-2 was the talk of the town in Singapore. Everywhere I went, people expressed their gratitude to the 509th Bomb Wing for bringing the B-2 to their country - true Global Power in the making," said Brig.

Gen. Ronald Marcotte, 509th BW commander, after returning from the Asian Aerospace Expo in Singapore. He and Capt. Gavin Ketchen flew the *Spirit of California* over the air show on Feb. 6, 1996.





**Staff Sgt. Ron Clark, 509th Maintenance Squadron, plugs a testing cable into a line replaceable unit at the new intermediate-level avionics maintenance shop on base.**

✓ Air Force announces early Limited Operational Capability for B-2 Spirit. On Jan. 1 the B-2 became available for use in a conventional bombing role.

✓ A 29.8-hour March 19-20 mission brings the 509th closer to IOC and proves the B-2's capabilities. The wing's longest Global Power mission to date took place March 19-20 as part of Coronet 97-2. It was flown by Maj. Rob O'Neal and Capt. Scott Hughes, 393rd Bomb Squadron, in the *Spirit of Florida*. The non-stop mission launched from Whiteman and included four aerial refuelings and a live conventional weapons release over the Vieques Range, Puerto Rico.

✓ 509th achieves Initial Operational Capability on April 1. "It's you – the people – that really make the difference," said Brig. Gen. Tom Goslin Jr.

✓ Wing completes 29.9-hour Global Power mission May 23-25 and a global-aided munitions drop with a GAM-113. The mission was flown by Capt. Jeff Long and Maj. Scott Kramer, 393rd Bomb Squadron. "This certainly is a 21st-century version of President Teddy Roosevelt's 'talk softly and carry a big stick' policy,"



**Capt. Aaron Smoller and Tech. Sgt. Donald Vann plan a Global Power mission. They are members of the 509th Operations Support Squadron.**

said Lt. Col. Jonathan George, 509th Operations Group deputy commander.

✓ The 509th Maintenance Squadron's Avionics Flight develops an intermediate-level avionics maintenance shop on base. Instead of shipping parts out to be fixed, they can be worked on initially by flight line mechanics, and if there's still a problem with the aircraft, handed to the inter-



**Capt. Jeff Long, 393rd Bomb Squadron, patiently waits as the research physiologist from Armstrong Laboratory at Brooks Air Force Base, Texas, removes electrodes and recording devices after a 44.4-hour simulator mission, the longest simulator flight in Air Force history. Long flew the mission with Maj. Steve Moulton.**

mediate maintenance shop to be fixed. Expected savings once all B-2s are Block 30 is \$15 million per year.

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Maj. Len Litton, 325th Bomb Squadron operations officer, and members of the newly reactivated squadron, listen to their new commander's remarks.



Airman 1st Class Michael Sandoval, Tech. Sgt. Frank Carroll and Staff Sgt. Frank Worley, 509th Communications Squadron, pull a cargo net over the top of the 509th CS pallet during Spirit Force 99-2.

✓ 325th Bomb Squadron stands up Jan. 6. "The 325th Bomb Squadron, an illustrious unit with a heritage matched by few, is once again at the tip of the spear, ready at a moment's notice to go in harm's way for the same reasons as those who have gone before," said Lt. Col. Will Gildner, 325th BS commander.

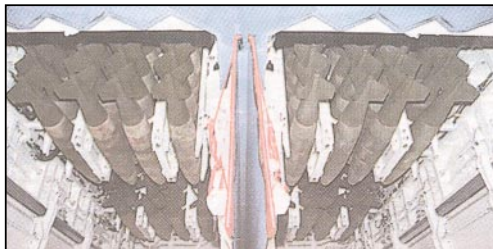
✓ The *Spirit of Missouri* returns to Whiteman Jan. 30. It was modified from the Block 10 configuration to Block 30. The aircraft joined the 325th BS.

✓ The *Spirit of Arizona* was named March 20 to become the 18th in the inventory.

✓ B-2s dropped four 2,000-pound JDAM-109 April 28 on the White Sands, N.M., range against buried targets. "One of the drops, we released two weapons against the same target. The second weapon actually followed the first into the same hole," said Maj. Douglas Carpenter, 393rd BS and pilot for the mission.

✓ The *Spirit of Mississippi*, a Block 30 aircraft, was named May 23. It was the 19th B-2 to enter the Air Force inventory.

✓ Team Whiteman wows inspectors during the June Joint Nuclear Surety Inspection and Nuclear Operational Readiness Inspection. This was the first full-scale JNSI and NORI at Whiteman since the B-2's arrival on Dec. 17, 1993. It's also the first JNSI conducted of a weapons system prior to its reaching fully mission capable status.



The B-2 *Spirit of Pennsylvania* carries 80 MK-82 500-pound weapons during Island Spirit 98 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. Bombs were put on target, on time March 30 on a range north of Guam by Capt. Tony Monetti and Chris Harness, 393rd Bomb Squadron.

✓ Russian inspectors visited Whiteman Oct. 20-21. This was the third Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty-related visit this year and the second inspection in four weeks for Whiteman. The two previous visits included inspections of the former missile facilities. This inspection was the first of the bomber-related facilities since March 1997.

✓ The 509th Bomb Wing tested its ability to generate and deploy personnel, aircraft and cargo to forward operating locations while employing B-2 combat sorties during Spirit Force 99-2. It also tests the wing's ability to support a forward base and the ability of those deployed to survive and operate in a hostile environment.

The B-2 "represents America's enduring power as a leader in America's defense," said Maj. Gen. Dick Hawley, commander of Air Combat Command at the Spirit of Mississippi naming ceremony.





Photo by Airman 1st Class Joe Lacdan

Attendees at the B-2 anniversary ceremony wave flags as they watch the *Spirit of Missouri* taxi into position Wednesday. More than 1,500 people attended the event, which commemorated the B-2's 10th year here.



Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Nixon

Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, Brig. Gen. Tony Przybyslawski and retired Maj. Gen. Leroy Barnidge, former 509th Bomb Wing commanders, and Col. Doug Raaberg, 509th Bomb Wing commander, cut the B-2 anniversary cake at the B-2 10th Anniversary Gala Wednesday.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Joe Lacdan

The *Spirit of Missouri*, piloted by Col. Scott Land and Lt. Col. Rich Vanderburgh soars over Whiteman during a special flyover re-enacting the original B-2 delivery 10 years ago. Vanderburgh, a 509th Operations Support Squadron member, is the most experienced B-2 pilot in the Air Force with over 1,500 sortie hours.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Joe Lacdan

Col. Scott Land, 509th Operations Group deputy commander, waves to ceremony guests after his flyover. Land was one of the first pilots selected to fly the B-2.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Joe Lacdan

The *Spirit of Missouri* taxis as media members look on. Wing members conducted a re-enactment of the original delivery of the first B-2 to Whiteman in 1993.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Joe Lacdan

Former Air Combat Command commander retired Gen. Mike Loh speaks with Scott Charton, Associated Press reporter, as U.S. Representative Ike Skelton of Missouri's 4th District, looks on. Gen. Loh piloted the *Spirit of Missouri* on its first flight to Whiteman in 1993.



Photo by Senior Airman Tia Schroeder

Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, speaks to wing members and guests. Carlson officially declared the B-2 fully operational capable Wednesday.



- ✓ Two B-2s successfully drop 32 2,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions on targets in the former Republic of Yugoslavia March 24. Operation Noble Anvil marks the B-2’s first combat employment. The skin of the plane — made of composite materials designed to absorb and deflect radar — is “holding up very well,” said Col. Bill Hood, 509th Logistics Group commander. “This should lay to rest concerns people may have about the aircraft’s stealthiness.”
- The B-2s flew the 31-hour mission non-stop from Whiteman to the target area and back. The jets followed cruise missiles and were the first manned aircraft over the targets.
- ✓ 509th Services Squadron wins ACC Maj. Gen. Eugene Eubank Award for best services squadron.
- ✓ The 509th Operations Support Squadron Weather

- Flight is named best in Air Combat Command.
- ✓ 509th Operations Support Squadron earns Airfield Operations Flight Complex of the Year and Air combat command’s Air Traffic Control Airfield Management Annual Award
  - ✓ ACC names 20th B-2 *Spirit of Indiana* on May 22.
  - ✓ Lt. Col. Rich Vanderburgh becomes the first Air Force B-2 pilot to log more than 1,000 hours in the stealth bomber. The flight took place in the *Spirit of Arizona*.
  - ✓ President Bill Clinton visits Whiteman to congratulate members for support operations during the crisis in Kosovo. “The pilots, the crews, the weaponeers, the maintenance personnel and everyone who is part of the B-2 team should take special pride in proving what a truly remarkable aircraft can do,” Clinton said during his visit June 11.

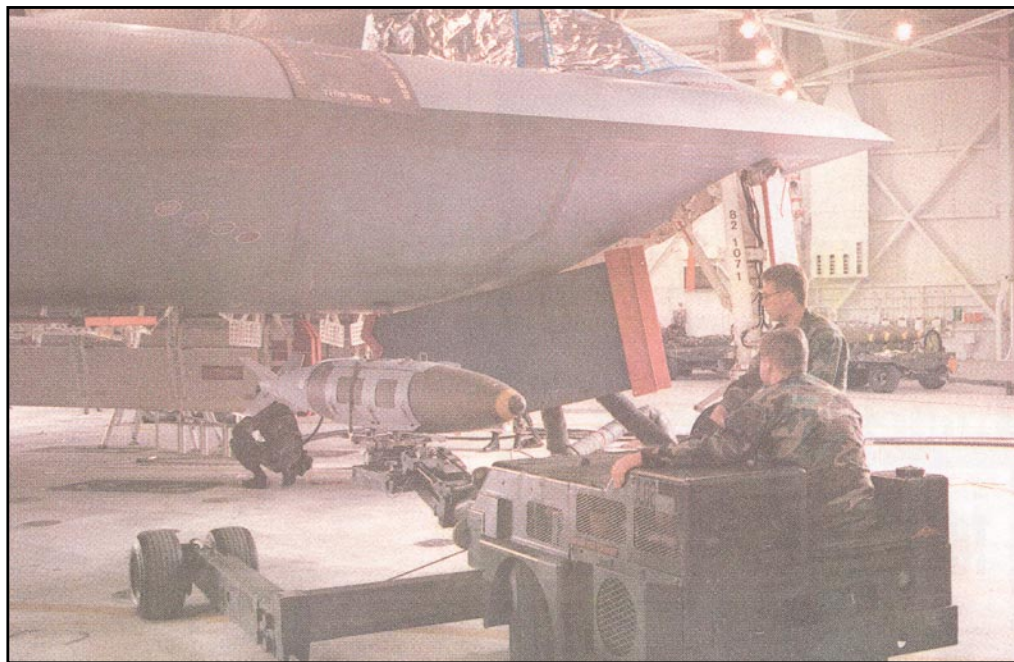
- ✓ The first time the B-2 was on static display outside the United States was July 24-25 at the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford.
- ✓ In September, the 509th BW participated in the second annual Joint Force Expeditionary Exercise, which tested the B-2’s ability to receive messages, retargeting information, threat location files, target imagery, weather reports and weather satellite imagery while en route to a target.
- ✓ 509th earns Air Force Association David C. Schilling Award for its successful combat missions during Operation Allied Force.
- ✓ Four B-2s from the 325th Bomb Squadron participate in Spirit Hawk II flying 12 sorties at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, Oct. 4-15 in this Red Flag-type exercise that uses low observable and conventional aircraft capabilities.

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Tech. Sgt. Brian Caton, 509th Maintenance Squadron Munitions Flight, stencils the fuse setting onto a Joint Direct Attack Munition. The JDAM is an all-weather munition that uses the global positioning system to seek out and destroy targets. "It feels good knowing I'm on the cutting edge of my career field. After seeing some of the bomb damage ratings and media clips on TV I can honestly say I'm proud to be making Whiteman's weapons today," Caton said in reference to the JDAMS that were dropped during Operation Allied Force.



Weapons loaders load a Joint Direct Attack Munition into the B-2 weapons bay. The B-2 can carry 16 of the 2,000-pound weapons.

"This airplane does everything it's advertised to do and more, but it's only a piece of hardware. It's the people who make it happen, from those who designed it and built it to those who operate and maintain it every day — they make it as good as it is," said Brig. Gen. Leroy Barnidge Jr., 509th Bomb Wing commander.

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**The B-2 *Spirit of America* taxis into position outside base operations July 14 for the arrival ceremony.**



**Airman 1st Class Bobby-Wayne Lewis uses a lightgun in the control tower to stop traffic on the taxi way.**

✓ The B-2 team tested and evaluated the latest B-2 software upgrade and dropped the first-ever Joint Standoff Weapons Jan. 11, 19 and 25 at the Utah Test and Training Range. The event highlighted the latest near-precision munition in the B-2 arsenal. The weapon uses global positioning system satellites to navigate to the target.

✓ The 509th dropped the first full-rate inventory JSOW Sept. 6 at the Utah Test and Training Range. The JSOW is a glide bomb, which means it has no engines and uses its wings to help guide it to the target.

“The B-2 and the JDAM earned starring roles in Opera-

tion Allied Force because of the ability to put bombs on target. Now that the B-2 can drop the JDAM and JSOW, the B-2 and 509th Bomb Wing garner even more respect around the world,” said Brig. Gen. Tony Przybyslawski, 509th BW commander. “These weapons make the B-2 a more attractive option for theater commanders. It offers them two different weapons packages to attack heavily defended targets and puts fewer American lives at risk.”

✓ Whiteman marks flying milestone; 509th records 25,000-plus hours of accident-free aviation. “This accomplishment demonstrates the tremendous dedication of

Team Whiteman to our mission and exemplifies ‘Excellence in all we do,’ said Col. Bob Byzewski, 509th BW vice commander.

✓ *Spirit of America* named on July 14. This Block 30 aircraft is the 21st member of the B-2 fleet.

✓ Work began on a low-observable facility in November. The 53,000-square-foot facility will provide the wing with more flexibility in maintaining this low-density, high-demand asset. Maintainers will be able to house two B-2s simultaneously.

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**Senior Airman Bo Selway and Airman 1st Class Joshua Gray, 509th Maintenance Squadron wheel and tire shop, build up a B-2 main landing gear tire. The squadron earned Air Combat Command's Maintenance Effectiveness Award for 2001.**



**Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld shakes hands with Master Sgt. Christopher Peay, 509th Communications Squadron, while Airman 1st Class Nathan Robinson, 509th Operations Support Squadron, and Senior Airman Michael Melton, 509th CS, look on.**

✓ The 509th Maintenance Squadron Propulsion Flight earned bragging rights for having the healthiest engine program in the military. The 17-member flight has 20 spare engines in the 509th Bomb Wing inventory, enhancing mission readiness. The B-2 uses four F118 engines.

✓ The 393rd Bomb Squadron wins first-ever Turkey Shoot July 17-18 against the 325th BS. Weapons load crew performance, aircraft maintenance discrepancies, on-time take-off capability, aerial refueling timing and performance, weapons scoring and time over target were judged.

✓ The 325th makes history when it performs back-to-back 21-hour sorties in just 45.5 hours using the *Spirit of Kansas*. The 3.5 hour quick-turn and allowed 325th members to test their combat capabilities.

✓ Gen. John Jumper, Air Force chief of staff, rallies Team Whiteman Sept. 20 after terrorists tried to unnerve America on Sept. 11. "When the nation is in a crisis, America turns to you to take care of business," he said.

✓ Six B-2s participate in air strikes in Afghanistan on the first three days of Operation Enduring Freedom in October. The sorties were longer than 40 hours and the longest was 44 hours, an aviation record. The missions originated at Whiteman, attacked targets in Afghanistan then recovered at Diego Garcia. After about an hour on the ground for an engine-running crew change, the jets were airborne again with a fresh crew for the more than 30-hour flight

home. During this time, the B-2's engines ran continuously for more than 70 hours.

✓ At Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's all-call with Team Whiteman Oct. 19 he said, "The terrorists thought they could strike fear in America's heartland. But through you, the heartland strikes back. The terrorists who visited this violence on America have made a mistake."

✓ Gen. Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Whiteman Oct. 26. In reference to OEF missions, he told Team Whiteman that the B-2 "brings unique capabilities to the fight and it does what it's designed to do. It does it very well."

✓ The 509th Medical Group Clinical Laboratory received accreditation with distinction from the College of American Pathologists.

✓ Lt. Gen. Tom Keck, 8th Air Force commander, lauds the 509th on operations in support of OEF. "We know this war on terrorism is going to take time. We've just run mile one of a 26-mile marathon. And the B-2 and 509th Bomb Wing are a critical part of the solution to this problem so I urge the men and women of the 509th to be ready. Our nation is counting on you," Keck said.

✓ The 509th garnered the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the wing's activities from June 1, 1999, to May 31, 2001.

✓ The Gold Flag team saved \$2.5 million over a two-year period. The savings supported quality-of-life improvements.

✓ The 509th Bomb Wing spends more than \$5.5 million in March to improve infrastructure and quality of life.

✓ Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James Roche visited the base in April. "The B-2 was just an airplane until you got it. What you have done with it has made it into a magnificent weapon system. A system the whole world fully respects. You've had the difficulty of maintaining a very exquisite system, in terms of electronics and low-observable characteristics. It's truly a compliment to Whiteman that you have kept this plane on the leading edge," he said.

✓ The April Cope Thunder deployment to Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., for 325th Bomb Squadron members was a realistic air combat training exercise operating at a forward location. "It was another step as we march to full operational capability," said Lt. Col. Bob Wheeler, 325th BS commander.

✓ The 509th Bomb Wing implemented the Standard Wing Organization in a July 15 ceremony. The 509th Support Group was redesignated as the 509th Mission Support Group and the 509th Logistics Group became the 509th Maintenance Group. The ceremony realigned the contracting, transportation and supply squadrons under the MSG, and combined transportation and supply to form the 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

✓ On Sept. 6, the 509th completed the final portion of the Standard Wing Organization when it reactivated the 509th Organizational Maintenance Squadron and redesignated it the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and the 509th Logistics Support Squadron was redesignated the 509th Main-



**Cpts. Kristin Goodwin and Jennifer Wilson are the first female pilots to fly the B-2 Spirit bomber. Their first flight was Feb. 12 and they graduated in May.**

tenance Operations Support Squadron. The move is designed to enhance the Air Force's warfighting capabilities.

"We are transforming to meet the challenges of tomorrow. This is not a change for change sake, but rather a significant and necessary course correction that will give the 509th Bomb Wing the right organizational structure to accomplish our mission,"

said Col. Doug Raaberg, 509th BW commander.

✓ The rush to bring manpower closer to the fight continues in September and deployment taskings for Aerospace Expeditionary Force 8 show a significant increase in deployed members to support the continued Global War on Terror.

✓ The renovated Deployment Process-

ing Center opened in October. The center supports deploying members, provides a comfortable place for them before boarding an aircraft and is a place for family to welcome home members.

✓ In fiscal 2002, the B-2 fleet set a new record flying 6,800 hours, nearly 500 of which were combat sorties over Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

✓ The 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Red Flight earned the 2002 Air Combat Command Maintenance Effectiveness Award.

"It's justification for a lot of hard work and long days put in by all the maintainers," said Staff Sgt. Fred Carter, *Spirit of Georgia* crew chief.

✓ The low-observable facility opened in November. The facility provides maintenance for and restoration of the B-2's stealth capability.

✓ Aircrews flew 50 sorties to set a record 400-hour training pace during a local deployment exercise in November. The exercise tested the 509th's deployment capability by separating 208 people and four B-2s and treating them as if they were in a forward location.

✓ In October, the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Red Flight won the quarterly weapons load competition. Contestants are evaluated on dress and appearance, a written exam, tool box organization and the loading process.

✓ The 509th Contracting, Comptroller and Civil Engineer squadrons netted more than \$4.5 million for a solid mixture of quality of life, mission and force protection projects.

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**Tech. Sgt. Courtney Risk, 509th Operations Support Squadron survival instructor, talks with Lt. Col. Andy Cernicky, 394th Combat Training Squadron commander, about the use of a PRC-112B survival radio.**

✓ As base members prepare for a possible war, Aerospace Expeditionary Force 7/8 concerns consume family members. In a March Town Hall meeting, Col. Doug Raaberg, 509th Bomb Wing commander, answered questions ranging from suggested forms of communication from families to their deployed members to child care concerns.

✓ In March, the Assistance Secretary of the Air Force authorized the use of Stop-Loss to retain specific skills necessary to meet national security objectives. It went into effect May 2 and affected 43 officer and 56 enlisted specialties.

✓ The 509th Medical Group Bioenvironmental Lab won the Air Combat Command Outstanding Bioenvironmental Engineering Flight/Element of the Year Award.

✓ Whiteman makes history March 12 with first forward deployment. More than 200 airmen left here as members of the 40th Expeditionary Operations Group, 393rd Expeditionary Bomb, and 509th Munitions and Aircraft Maintenance squadrons.

✓ Members of the 509th AMXS Gold and Red flights combined in March to become the Gold Aircraft Maintenance Unit Dragons.

✓ Coalition "shock air forces" aircraft flew nearly 1,000 strike sorties March 21 hitting Iraqi targets intended to end the regime of Saddam Hussein. The strikes marked the beginning of the air portion of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The B-2 flew the longest missions, lasting nearly 34 hours round-trip.

During OIF, the 509th flew combat sorties from Whiteman and from a forward operating location. Altogether, 43 B-2 missions were flown, employing nearly 600 GPS-guided munitions against high-value targets, many in areas where the collateral damage risk was very high.

Capt. Jennifer Wilson, 393rd EBS, was the first female B-2 pilot to fly a combat sortie.

✓ A B-2 Spirit bomber struck downtown Baghdad after hitting a key communications facility with precision-guided munitions March 27.

✓ On April 27, nearly 200 deployed members with the B-2 forward operating squadrons returned home. The 509th flew 40 percent of its missions from the FOL. The average sortie was 16.9 hours.

✓ Restoration of the *Spirit of Missouri* took place July 10 in the low-observable maintenance facility. It marked a new era in structural maintenance for the B-2 because the aircraft remains on base for LO repairs.

✓ On Aug. 14, a B-2 Spirit released two newly upgraded 5,000-pound live weapons in a test conducted by the B-2 Global Power Bomber Combined Test Force at Edwards AFB.

✓ The 2,250-pound Joint Attack Surface-Standoff Missile joins the B-2 weapons arsenal. The JASSM can be launched hundreds of miles away from a target instead of tens of miles. It provides an all-weather launch-and-leave capability against fixed and relocatable targets that are above ground or against hardened, shallow buried point targets.

✓ 509ers practiced forward-based operations at Andersen AFB, Guam, in September as part of Coronet Dragon 49, an Air Force Global Power exercise.

✓ The B-2 successfully dropped 80 500-pound JDAMs at the Utah Test and Training Range Sept. 10. This makes the aircraft more valuable to warfighters.

✓ Lt. Col. Rich Vanderburgh achieved an aeronautical milestone when he surpassed the 1,500-hour flying mark in the B-2 Oct. 2. He flew the *Spirit of Hawaii* on a 4.1-hour training sortie.

✓ The 715th Weapons Squadron stood up here Oct. 21. The squadron teaches aircrew members to be tactical experts in the employment of the B-2.

✓ The 715th WPS students deployed on their first two-week long exercise at Nellis AFB, Nev. The students planned and executed a 10-day war while working with 14 other weapons school squadrons during the exercise. The first class of three students graduate. They are: Maj. David Benson and Capt. Brian Bogue, 325th BS, and Capt. Mark Seng, 509th Operations Support Squadron.

"We recognize and thank members of the 509th Bomb wing for their sacrifices, both at home and overseas. I know that the members of the famed 509th are also proud and greatly appreciative of the outstanding support they continue to receive from their friends and neighbors in Missouri. On this day, and every day, our thoughts and prayers are with our military members and their families," said U.S. Representative Ike Skelton, Missouri's 4th District.



Staff Sgt. David Rohde, 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron dedicated crew chief, applies an Operation Iraqi Freedom decal to the *Spirit of Arizona* in May. This B-2 received four decals to represent its four OIF missions flown from Whiteman. The *Spirit of Arizona* also flew seven combat missions in Operation Allied Force.



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM — Capt. Mark Pye greets Maj. Sam White after he completed a combat sortie operating in the *Spirit of Pennsylvania*. Pye and White were deployed to a forward location as part of the 393rd Expeditionary Bomb Squadron. The *Spirit of Pennsylvania* flew five combat missions.

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# First 509th commander expresses pride in unit

By Staff Sgt. Francesca Popp  
Public Affairs

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** — Few dates carry as much significance as Dec. 17 does for the 509th. This week, the unit celebrated the B-2's 10th anniversary. However, the 509th also became another year older Wednesday.

Fifty-nine years ago, Dec. 17, 1944, then Lt. Col. Paul W. Tibbets Jr. founded the 509th Composite Group, today's 509th Bomb Wing.

The first 509th commander, though unable to attend Wednesday's celebrations, wanted to send a message to current and former 509ers.

"On this 10th (anniversary) of the B-2, I'm delighted particularly with the relationship between your organization today — the 509th Bomb Wing — and an organization I started back in 1944," said Tibbets, who retired as a brigadier general in 1966. "It was an unusual organiza-

tion. I know today, the 509th Bomb Wing is an unusual organization.

"I am extremely proud of what the (unit) is today. The 509th Bomb Wing is an elite group. I'm glad I can have that left-handed affiliation by being (a member of the) 509th," he said.

When asked about the B-2 and the wing being named fully operational capable, Tibbets said he thinks that's what it should be.

"The B-2 is a wonderful airplane. It's definitely been a long time coming," he said. "(The 509th BW) had a certain table of organization and equipment to adhere to. If you can't get the equipment, you're not ready. They got the equipment. So you should be fully operational ready.

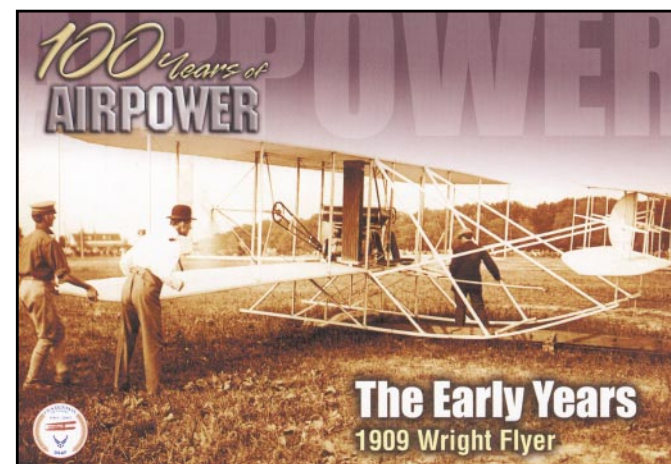
"I think everybody associated with it (the 509th) makes an organization combat ready," Tibbets said. "My congratulations to all of them for the part they're playing. (You should) all be proud of that ... it will do you well in days to come."



Photo by Senior Airman Tia Schroeder

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** — Airman 1st Class John Calvano, 509th Communications Squadron, films a message from retired Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets to 509th Bomb Wing members to wish them continued success with the B-2. Tibbets founded and commanded the 509th Composite Group, known today as the 509th Bomb Wing. He also piloted the Enola Gay, which dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6, 1945.

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## AF leaders celebrate Centennial of Flight

**WASHINGTON (AFPN)** — The following is a joint message from Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper:

"It was the most significant 12 seconds of the last 100 years.

"On Dec. 17, 1903, two bicycle builders from Ohio, Orville and Wilbur Wright, launched the world on a path to the heavens when their rudimentary airplane of wire, wood and canvas wings lifted off a windy, grassy hill at Kitty Hawk.

"Since their marvelous achievement, aviation has enabled our expansion, enhanced our commerce and expanded our communication.

"Military aviation developed quickly after that first flight. The names and exploits of our airpower pioneers are melded into our nation's history: Rickenbacker, Mitchell, Doolittle, Davis, Cochran and Yeager, to name just a few.

"While our past is storied, our present and future remain as boundless and adventurous as the Wright Brothers' dream. Because of our great airmen in today's Air Force, we have developed, operated, and exploited advanced weapons systems and technologies — from sensors and aircraft to lasers and satellites — enabling us to own the ultimate high ground and dominate any battlespace.

"The Centennial of Flight is as much about our future as it is about our past. We commend you for all that you do every day to promote this heritage and provide our nation with the finest air and space force in the world.

"We're proud to serve alongside you as we continue to discover ways to slip the surly bonds and deliver peace and freedom for our nation."



# Another milestone: 394th CTS trains first Navy B-2 pilot

By 2nd Lt. Kat Ohlmeyer

Public Affairs

While the B-2 has already seen many milestones in its first 10 years, the 394th Combat Training Squadron is currently training the program's first Navy pilot, who will fly his first B-2 sortie here next month.

Lt. Michael "Bobby" Orr, a native of California, has been flying the EA-6B Prowler for the Navy since 1998 and began his B-2 training with the 394th CTS in April.

The Prowler is the only platform that denies, disrupts and degrades the enemy's radar, so the crews are charged with supporting inter-service assets.

Since the Prowler helps the B-2 elude radar through electronic attack, the 509th Operations Support Squadron began bringing Prowler students from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Wash., to Whiteman in 2000 to teach them about the B-2 mission.

Orr was one of the students in the second class to visit Whiteman and that was when his assignment with the 509th Bomb Wing started to take shape.

"While I was out here, I started talking to some of the guys in the OSS and I asked them how you become a B-2 pilot," Orr said. "And I just happened to casually say, 'Well, have you ever had a Navy B-2 pilot?'"

The response Orr received was not what he expected because OSS members said they would like to have a Navy pilot in the program, specifically a Prowler pilot and a graduate of the Prowler Electronic Attack Weapons School. In fact, Orr was asked that day what he would be doing in a cou-



**Navy Lt. Michael "Bobby" Orr poses in front of the B-2 *Spirit of Ohio*. He's the first naval pilot to go through the B-2 training program.**

ple years.

Orr said he just laughed off the question. However, just five months later, as he was preparing for deployment on the USS Abraham Lincoln for Operation Enduring Freedom, he received a call from 509th BW officials saying they were serious about having him come fly for the wing.

But the process of getting a Navy pilot orders to an Air Force base to learn how to fly an Air Force plane is not easy.

"It's probably the greatest personnel story ever," Orr said. "Not only did I have complete support by our bureau of personnel to do this, but also from the Prowler community."

In fact, Orr said he was slated to go to the Fleet Replacement Squadron, which is similar to the 394th CTS, as a Prowler instructor pilot at the end of his deployment. The Prowler community, however, didn't let that stand in the way of his opportunity to be a part of the 509th BW.

"They basically agreed that allowing me this opportunity to expand my professional experience was in the best interests of the Prowler community and my contribution to it," he said. "Fortunately, the commander of the FRS was willing to fall one pilot short in manning for this to happen."

Once his training in the 394th CTS is complete, Orr will be assigned to the 509th

OSS as the wing electronic warfare officer, working on projects to maximize the B-2's stealth capability.

"I knew if I took this job I would be able to work on some interesting projects involving the B-2, and that was probably the biggest lure for me," Orr said.

Lt. Col. Brian O'Rear, 509th OSS commander, said the 509th benefits tremendously from having Orr integrated in the B-2 program.

"We usually go to war with EA-6B support, and strengthening our ties with that community is mutually beneficial. It makes the whole team stronger," the commander said.

Another benefit of Orr's assignment, for him and the 509th BW, is seeing how another service works.

"Having a Navy pilot in the B-2 helps us continue to increase interoperability with our sister services," O'Rear said. "No service goes to war alone. It takes a team effort. Bobby brings a slightly different perspective to our program and makes us a more lethal fighting force."

But Orr admits that there is a small part of him that is proud to be here because he'll be able to look back on his time here and know he was the first Navy pilot to become a B-2 pilot.

"It's not the overriding reason, but it's kinda cool," Orr said. "I hope that when this is all said and done, they (the 509th BW) will look back and say this was definitely worth it and that they got out of me what they hoped. And in the same regard, I hope the Prowler community finds that this was worth it, because if they don't, I will have failed."

## B-2 'Spirit of Freedom' on display at U.S. Air Force Museum

**WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio**

— The B-2 stealth bomber's bat-like airframe design and unique construction make the aircraft largely undetectable to radar and an ominous threat to heavily defended targets.

However, for the general public, that changed Tuesday when the U.S. Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio, unveiled a reassembled and restored B-2 ground test airframe for permanent public display.

The aircraft will go in the museum's new 200,000-square-foot Eugene W. Kettering Building, which opens fully to the public in July.

"Adding a B-2 stealth bomber to our collection is very significant and unique," said Charles Metcalf, museum director. "Plus, this aircraft will allow us to further demonstrate how Air Force airpower is helping transform combat through capabilities such as stealth, speed, global reach and precision."

Air Force, museum and Northrop Grumman officials dedicated the B-2, christening it the "Spirit of Freedom." The addition of the B-2 will add to the already considerable collection of more than 300 aircraft and aerospace vehicles at the world's largest and oldest military aviation museum.

Representing an intensive restoration project that took just under three years, the B-2 the museum will display was originally used to evaluate the airframe's structural integrity under varying degrees of stress. As part of the evaluation, the airframe was intentionally tested to failure, causing a large crack in its skin, which the museum restoration crew filled in.

Although the airframe was constructed with the external features of a B-2, it did not receive the normal complement of internal avionics and components. When restoration is complete, however, the test article's exterior appearance will be nearly indistinguishable from an operational B-2.

Because it wasn't built to fly, the museum's B-2 was disassembled and shipped to the museum in various sections, with a major center section coming to Wright-Patterson AFB and the museum via a C-5 in February 2001. Since then, the museum's restoration staff has been tackling the massive and unprecedented assignment of reassembling the aircraft and preparing it for the long-anticipated public rollout.

"The greatest challenge and achievement of restoring the



**WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — U.S. Air Force Museum officials formally inducted a B-2 Spirit stealth bomber into the institution's**

**aircraft collection Dec. 16. The Air Force's national museum is the first place to permanently exhibit the stealth bomber to the public.**

B-2 without doubt was the physical handling and reconnecting of the major aircraft sections without the benefit of any specialized equipment," said Myrl Morris, chief of the museum's restoration division. "Some of these sub-sections weighed close to 70,000 pounds, requiring a lot of ingenuity and common sense to reassemble and secure, with safety of the crew members always the main concern."

Along with reconnecting major aircraft sections, restoration workers fabricated and installed certain unavailable parts. Overall, the project required a meticulous, detailed approach, with crew members crawling inside sections as deeply as 12 feet through a space barely large enough to squeeze through, then staying there for six to eight hours ratcheting fasteners in order to reconnect sections.

"This is by the far the most ambitious and largest restora-

tion project we've ever attempted," Morris said. "There have been more time-consuming projects but never anything this large."

Terry Kasten, B-2 deputy program director in the B-2 System Program Office at Wright-Patterson, said the B-2 that's going on display will have a utility beyond that of a museum display vehicle. Program officials will actually use the museum's B-2 on occasion for structural testing to help identify and develop improvements for the Air Force's active B-2 fleet.

"Even during the restoration of this B-2, base engineers used the aircraft to conduct thermal analysis in the exhaust nozzle area," Kasten said. "The museum has committed to allowing us use of this test aircraft when new and unique test requirements crop up."